1: Rivers E-5 (ca. 1901-02) 1906 Toda

124 made use of so much of his evidence as I believe to be trustworthy. His knowledge was not deep or accurate, but he often told me enough to enable me to extract the full account from others, who, seeing I knew something, thought they might as well tell me all. On one or two subjects, the whole of my information is derived from this man, but whenever this is the case I mention the fact, so that my readers may know the doubtful nature of the evidence. I only give such information, however, when I believe it to be correct. The informant in question was one of the cleverest of the Todas, and his usual fault was not that he deliberately deceived, but that he supplied the lacunæ in his knowledge by having recourse to his imagination. In the matter of folk-tales, where the difficulties of checking an account are especially great, I was obliged wholly to reject his assistance.

● [115] An altogether different type of witness was my constant attendant, Kòdrner. His special business was to bring me people as the subjects for my psychological work and to act as my guide in visiting various parts of the hills. He did not profess to any wide knowledge of custom or ceremonial, and was always diffident about the information he gave; but he was a good observer, and could give an excellent account of any ceremony which he had witnessed or of any procedure in which he had been involved.

Except in a few cases the Todas were quite unable to give any explanations of their customs, the answer to nearly every inquiry being that the custom in question was ordained by the goddess Teikirzi. In the few cases in which an explanation was forthcoming, it seemed to me that it was usually a recent invention. The explanations of customs given in this book are therefore almost invariably those arrived at by myself from the study of the available evidence.

114 127 While I was working I had by me the books or papers of Harkness, Marshall, Breeks, and Thurston, the chief previous writers on the Todas, and I inquired into most of the details mentioned by them; but I have not

1: Rivers E-5 (ca. 1901-02) 1906 Toda

184 234 616 theless the Tartharol are very proud of the fact that the institution of the *ti* belongs to their division, and whenever I asked a Tarthar man why he considered his people superior to the Teivaliol, the answer always ran that they had the *ti* and that the Teivaliol who tended the *ti* were their servants.

234 778 The buffaloes belonging to a *ti* are of two kinds, distinguished as *persinir* and *punir*. The former are the sacred buffaloes, and the elaborate ceremonial of the *ti* dairy is concerned with their milk. The *punir* correspond in some respects to the *putiir* of the ordinary village dairy, and their milk and its products are largely for the personal use and profit of the *palol* and are not treated with any special ceremony. The *persinir* are usually of various kinds, but the nature of their classification is different at each *ti* and its consideration may be postponed till later.

●115 124 234 I obtained most of my information from people connected with the Nòdrs *ti*. During the whole of my visit the herds of this *ti* were at Mòdr, which is only about a mile from the Paikara bungalow. Owing to the restrictions on intercourse with so sacred a personage as a *palol*, it was not practicable to obtain all my information from those actually in office, and I found it best to work with men who had formerly held the post and had retired. I worked chiefly with Kaners (63), an old man who had been *palol* at the Nòdrs *ti*, and with Koboners (58), who had been at the Kars *ti*. For some time I worked with one or other of these two men every day, paying occasional visits to Mòdr to observe as much of the ceremonial as I was allowed to see. On these occasions I was also able to consult Karkievan, the chief *palol*, on points about which the ex-officials were doubtful.

Both Kaners and Koboners were trustworthy witnesses, but Kaners was old and had given up his office some time before, and in consequence often committed faults of omission. Koboners was an admirable informant, and the fulness of the account of the *ti* ceremonial is largely due to him. It must be remembered that I was only able to see for myself a few superficial features of the ceremonial, and that my account is based on the descriptions given by these and other men, but

l: Rivers E-5 (ca. 1901-02) 1906 Toda

115 124 234

nevertheless I have a considerable degree of confidence in its essential accuracy.

The dairy of a *ti* is always called *poh*, whatever its shape may be, and at those places where there is, or should be, more than one *palol*, each has his own dairy. In these cases the work of one dairy goes on quite independently of the other, each *palol* being only allowed to enter and work in his own building. In addition to the dairy, or dairies, there is at each *ti mad* a hut in which the *palol* and *kaltmokh* sleep and in which the latter takes his food. When there are two *palol*, both sleep in the same hut. There is a house for the calves called *karanpoh*, corresponding to the *kwotars* of the village dairy.

234 343 793

The milking-place of a *ti mad* is called *pepkarmus* instead of *irkarmus*, as at the ordinary dairy, and is usually enclosed so that the buffaloes are screened from the eyes of ordinary people.

234 417 778

There is always one buffalo-pen, or *tu*,[1] for ordinary use, and at some places two others, called *pon tu*, or festival pens, used on the ceremonial occasions of migration from one place to another and of salt-giving.

The surroundings of the dairy are called *pül*, and there is a special part of the *pül* to which alone the ordinary Toda is allowed to go, and he may only go there by a special path. Each *ti* dairy which I visited was by the side of a wood and the place for ordinary Todas was in the wood.

At a little distance from the dairy there is the source from which the water for sacred purpose is drawn. This source is called *kwoinir*, and at Mòdr, where there was a *kwoinir* for each *palol*, it was a spring built in with stones, and not a stream as at most villages. In addition to the *kwoinir* there is also a stream from which water is taken by the *kaltmokh*, who is not allowed to go to the sacred spring.

234 312 778

There are various stones and other objects of ceremonial importance at most *ti* places, but the description of these may be given with that of the ceremonies in which they play a part.

[1] The proper name for the pen at the *ti* was *mudadr*, and for the calf-pen, *tüli-kadr*, but my informants always used the ordinary words *tu* and *kadr*.

2: Marshall G-5 (1870) 1873 Toda

PREFACE.

114 115 121 In the course of a furlough I took in the year 1870 to the Madras sanatarium of Utacamand, in the Nilagiri mountains,[1] I heard much of an 'aboriginal race' living in the neighbourhood; which, infanticidal and polyandrous, was said to be fast dying out.

I had long been curious to understand the mysterious process by which, as appears inevitable, savage tribes melt away when forced into prolonged contact with a superior civilisation. But, ignorant of all the languages of South India, I should have relinquished attempt to study the Todas, had I not the great good fortune to make the acquaintance of the Reverend FRIEDRICH METZ, of the Basel Missionary Society, who had spent upwards of twenty years in labours amongst the primitive tribes forming the inhabitants of the Nilagiris; and who, in addition to being skilled in several Drâvidian dialects, was exceptionally practised in High Kanarese and Tamil. Above all, he was the only European able to speak the obscure Toda tongue.

Mr. METZ most readily agreed to co-operate with me in strict enquiry into the condition of the Todas, and

[1] Commonly called 'Ootacamund, in the Nilgherry hills'; it being the peculiar Anglo-Indian custom to style all mountains, hills. Thus the Himalayas are only hills, whilst in England, Ben Nevis and Snowdon are mountains.

2: Marshall G-5 (1870) 1873 Toda

114 henceforth became my sole associate in all expeditions
115 amongst them—save one or two.
121 It is the more proper and just that I should in this place render Mr. METZ the warmest acknowledgment of the very disinterested and important share he had in the undertaking, that there is so little in what I have written in these pages to recall his name. It was not only that his knowledge of Toda dialect was invaluable for minute and truthful investigation, but the personal respect in which he was held by the people, and the confidence they placed in his fidelity to them, obtained for us a more friendly welcome and complete exposure of their minds than would have been accorded had we been mere strangers. I must state, however, that my friend is not, even in the slightest degree, responsible for any opinions I have expressed.

A small Vocabulary, compiled and carefully revised by Mr. METZ, will be found as the groundwork of the last Chapter. It may be said, more entirely to consist of actual Toda words than any other existing.

121 Our operations began with a census of a portion of
124 the tribe, combined with an examination of each of the families that came before us. But in proportion as our work advanced, so did interest in the subject develop, until the scheme was entertained of enlarging the topic from its original design, so as to embrace 'a study of the manners and customs of a primitive race of man.'

With this evolution grew also the desire so to describe what I had seen, as to enable readers who could never have an opportunity of witnessing life amongst

2: Marshall G-5 (1870) 1873 Toda

CHAP. XXV. describe the connection between such brothers as follows: 'Their fathers are brothers-in-law: their mothers being sisters, they are brothers.' An uncle is styled 'my little father'; most significant.

The marriage system I have described is elastic. It is capable of being modified in its internal working without change in the actual principle. Thus, when women are scarce, several men have to be content with one wife between them. But as women become more numerous, a greater proportion of men are able to procure a wife a-piece. This condition of permanent routine is supremely satisfying to the Toda mind.

The general expression for marriage is represented by the word kûdîken — I join.[8] Thus, 'Beliani is married to Nastufi' would be translated Beliani Nastufig kûdthchi, or they are joined to one another. But in addressing a man with the casual question of, 'Are you married?' the ordinary way of putting it, would be to say, 'Is there a son?'—Mokh vathchya? He would reply, Ha, mokh vathchi, 'Yes, there is a son:' or if married, but childless, he would detail, Ân kukh kûdthbini, mokh illade—'I joined a woman, a son is not.'

Similarly, the enquiry made of a woman would be, Belthta gavthchya?—'Is the neck-ring tied?'[9]

Mr. Metz has been so good as to describe for me a singular custom connected with weddings, which he learnt subsequently to my having left the Nilagiris: of which no sort of explanation can be supplied by the Todas.

When the wife has gone seven months with her first child, she retires with her husband alone, to the depths of the village wood, where at the foot of some tree she places a

[8] I am not certain that in the word 'join,' we have got the most primitive meaning of kûdîken. The Hindustani word kûdna, and its Sanskrit root kurd = *play*, might be compared.

[9] For the modes in which husbands and wives address one another, see Chapter VII.

9:Emeneau L-5 (1935-1938) 1939 AW60 Toda AW60

THE CHRISTIAN TODAS*

M. B. EMENEAU

Honorary Fellow in Linguistics, Yale University

(Communicated by Franklin Edgerton)

ABSTRACT

A description of the Christian Todas in their relations with the flourishing culture of the tribe. They retain in the economic sphere a dependence on the tribal pastures, and show a tendency to retain the old type of economic partnership with individual Kotas. The converts retain their Toda names, even when these belong to the tribal religious sphere; in naming children born within the Christian community there is a tendency not to give Toda names. Cross-cousin marriage is followed when possible; disputes on matrimonial affairs follow tribal patterns. The tribal dance and song-technique are retained, and one Christian lyric of great beauty was recorded. The tribe treats the Christians as outsiders in general, but several links remain, notably in the meeting of obligations by both sides when marriages take place. There are attempts by the tribe to force the Christians to meet obligations on the occasion of tribal funerals; when they are met, it is generally due to compulsion. An attempt is made to evaluate the whole situation in terms of the attitudes of tribal members.

DURING a linguistic field-trip among the Todas of the Nilgiris in South India, I came into contact also with the section of the tribe who have become Christians. In fact, the two interpreters whom I used in my investigations into the Toda language were Christian Todas, since it is only among these that any fluent knowledge of English is so far to be found. A number of interesting episodes of Christian Toda life came to light during the period of nearly three years in which I had intermittent contact with the two communities. It seems useful to collect these and to attempt an evaluation of the elements of the tribal culture which have survived among the Christians and of the relations between the tribal Todas and the Christians. The attempt is worthwhile since studies of Christianized communities which exist by the side of the parent communities with the original culture in full working-order are rare.

The only mission which has worked among the Todas in recent times and made converts is the Church of England Zenana Mission Society. The work was begun in 1890 by Miss Catherine F. Ling[1] and seems to

* This paper represents a small part of the work which I was enabled to do in South India with the aid of the American Council of Learned Societies in 1935-6 and of the American Philosophical Society (Penrose Fund) in 1936-8.

[1] Two small books by this lady describe her work: *Dawn in Toda Land* (3rd ed., Madras, S. P. C. K. Press, 1919) and *Sunrise on the Nilgiris* (London, Smith Press, 1923). There is little of anthropological interest in these, which were of course written as descriptions of missionary work; the resistance of the tribe however is well brought out and some of the accounts of converts' histories amount almost to life-histories such as anthropologists gather.

9:Emeneau L-5 (1935-1938) 1939 AW60 Toda AW60

about 50, including some wives who were Tamilian by origin, and all the children.[1] In 1932 Miss Ling returned to England after fifty years of missionary life. The Toda Christians who had turned to her for settlement of all their difficulties now found themselves without strong and sympathetic guidance, and dissatisfaction with those who succeeded her and quarrels among themselves, as well as difficulty in meeting their financial obligations to the mission and to Miss Ling herself, who had aided them with large loans from her own means, produced in the community what may only be regarded as disintegration. In 1938 Miss Ling felt compelled to return to India and her influence had already begun to heal the breaches before I lost contact with the community.

A few of the men have taken to other economic pursuits than agriculture. One is a chauffeur, one a policeman, another was apprenticed to a tailor. [kuanoːn] (34, Kwodron) showed promise in school and later studied at the Madras Christian College in Madras, where he learned English with remarkable correctness and fluency (he was my best interpreter). He was employed as a clerk in various government offices in Ootacamund but got into financial difficulties of a somewhat disreputable sort, and finally to extricate himself became a convert to the Seventh Day Adventist Mission. [kanfusodj] (14, Kunpuradi) has been a chauffeur but is now an agriculturalist. His English is rather defective, but he made a remarkably good interpreter and informant in investigations into ethnological matters, since his interest in tribal affairs is intense, and in the song-technique of the Todas, with which he is thoroughly familiar, being himself the quasi-official composer of the Toda Christians. Most of the members of the community work industriously at their agricultural life and, since the Nilgiris specialize in growing potatoes for the markets in the plains and as far north as Bombay, economic life is fairly secure and permits a standard which is in many ways higher than that of the tribe and than that of many other Christian communities of South India. The women continue to do Toda embroidery for sale through the mission.[2]

Economically, the Christian community has had to separate itself from the tribe. One link however remains. The pastures of the Christians become poor seasonally and at such times cattle which are not giving milk are often pastured with the tribe's herds in the dry-weather pastures. The man to whom such cattle are entrusted is recompensed with a small fee. Frequently the same course is adopted with young

[1] This figure is only a guess and probably a slight overestimate. The census figure of 807 for the Todas in the year 1931 included 27 Christian Todas, according to the enumerators, although the mission claimed 37. The Christian community has undoubtedly grown since then by the addition of converts and of births.

[2] See my paper *Toda Garments and Embroidery*, JAOS 57. 277-290.

12: Emeneau L-5 (1935-1938)1941 AW60 Toda AW60

196 The remaining passage in a song about my investigations is as follows:

539 614

noḷkanɯsk	aydj-mil-aydj	puɳɯðik		
poḷjoɰ-zoɪrjm	oɪtoɰ-foɲt	ðštjɯɖoɪ	ɯɖwðik	
om arjeɲ	enk ðltoθ	sotj-moɪɖkin	ɯɖwðuŋg	noɪɾɳɯsfɯɯ

"You sent message after message to the mund omganɪs. You said: 'Tell me without fail the nature of the poḷjoɰ.' Noɪɾɳɯs (Nðdrners, 67) said: 'I do not know; I was not told; I swear an oath.' " The pair poḷjoɰ, oɪtoɰ is used as demanded by convention, as is also poɲt "w rd," but to fit the pertinent word poḷjoɰ (which I was enquiring about) into the context, the conventional noɪlkj was replaced by koɪrjm,[25] primarily "ceremony, ritual detail," here "details in general, nature." The song-phrases have been violently torn from their usual contexts and oɪtoɰ-foɲt, necessary by convention, is here quite meaningless. (Incidentally, noɪɾɳɯs was the only Toda who ever refused information about matters that he certainly knew thoroughly.) The relationship within a matrilineal sib is essentially surrounded by shame, embarrassment (noɪlkj), and should not be talked about to outsiders. This was undoubtedly Rivers' experience, and so his failure to find out about the matrilineal sibs, even though he got the word poḷjoɰ, is to be explained.

115 609 114

On the whole, then, examination of the song-passages where matrilineal sibs are mentioned convinces me that the key-passage to an understanding of the conventional song-pair poḷjoɰ, oɪtoɰ did not turn up in the many texts that I recorded. This was my frequent experience in recording songs and interpreting the song-language. In many cases a pair can have originated in one context only and was then transferred, sometimes violently, to other contexts where it did not quite fit. If it did not fit but was used only in an allusive manner, it was usually impossible to get at a literal meaning. Occasionally the original context would be found in a song only after dozens of instances had occurred in which the words were badly fitted. In the case of the phrase under discussion the original context has not turned up. We may suspect that an account in a song of the path of the dead might contain the key-passage, and yet such accounts occur in the material to the number of half a dozen, none containing the desired passage. Moreover, as has been seen above in the discussion of the prose passage, the pair poḷjoɰ, oɪtoɰ may have been imported into it from the songs and certainly is not a good fit in its context.

614 835

It is clear however from the song-passages, the prose passage, and the refusal of noɪɾɳɯs to give information that the essential element in the attitude of the Todas to the matrilineal sibs is one of shame and embarrassment. And yet we are not much further in our understanding of the psychology of the matter. The best guess on the reason for the difference of attitude towards the patrilineal sibs and the matrilineal sibs is that, while incestuous relations are forbidden within both types of sibs, the latter, as the one containing one's mother and sisters, is the one where incest comes closest home. In Toda culture the crucial relations are part of a larger division which is worked intimately into the entire social structure of the

[25] This word is borrowed ultimately from Sanskrit kārya.

13: Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW60 Toda AW60

In religion, the Todas are definitely not Hindu. They do go on pilgrimage to Hindu shrines, and their diviners have some sort of esoteric contact with temples in Malabar. But the Toda faith is not of the orthodox Hindu kind, and their gods have quite different names and natures.[1]

Today, the Toda gods are very hazy figures. What has happened is that with the passage of time, ritual has come to play so important a part in religious practices, that a clear conception of the deities is now quite beyond the Todas. From the elders whom I questioned (especially Ujar, 48)[2] – they are the only persons who know something about this nowadays – I obtained, however, information concerning an intricate and rich mythology. This describes an early period in which the gods moved freely with men in the Nilgiris. They led the same kind of pastoral life as the latter do today, caring for their herds of buffaloes and processing their milk in their dairy-temples. Only some of these gods are reputed to be still present on the plateau, each living on the summit of a distinctive hill.

It will not be necessary to enlarge here upon the Toda religion. Rivers' account of it, to which readers are again referred, is, broadly speaking, accurate and exhaustive, and will be enough to give a very good idea of its nature. The principal gods most frequently mentioned by the Todas and about whom it will be sufficient to know in the present connection are the following: 1) *Ön*, the Lord of the Underworld (*Amnor*) to which he retired after a long period in the Nilgiris; while he was still living there, he created, together with his wife, *Pinakursh*, men (*Olkh* = Todas) as well as the Toda sacred buffaloes; 2) *Terkish*, the sister of Ön; she is by far the leading Toda deity, amounting to a protective tribal mother-goddess, of whom you hear continually; she is reputed to have stayed behind in the Nilgiris when Ön retired to Amnor; she has her earthly residence at the summit of a hill called Tödhut near Ootacamund; the Todas say that she is, however, omnipresent, to be found anywhere in the world; in their language, the Blue Mountains are called after her, *Terkishnor*, or the land of Terkish.

[1] During my last stay in the Nilgiris, it was my good fortune to discover what appeared to me to be eleven Sumerian deities among the six hundred or so gods and goddesses which compose the Toda pantheon, something which would go to indicate a very early cultural connection indeed with the world of Antiquity (*Possible Sumerian Survivals in Toda Ritual*, by the same author, see Bibliography).

[2] Whenever a Toda name is followed by a number such as here, the latter refers to the corresponding genealogical table in *The Todas*, by W. H. R. Rivers.

13: Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW60 Toda AW60

586 Rivers says that a man may divorce his wife for only two reasons, namely, either that she is a fool or that she will not work. He adds, however, that illness of the husband has also sometimes been regarded as a ground for divorce (Rivers, *The Todas*, p. 525).

But from my field-work in the Nilgiris, I gathered that the only real reason for a man wanting to be legally separated from his wife, was that she had co-habited with a non-Toda. He would then take one of his male buffaloes, tie a coconut shell round its neck in the presence of the *noim* which he had called together for that purpose. He would next cut off his wife's hair, beat her publicly, and end up by driving her together with the buffalo back to the house of his parents-in-law. I never actually saw this happen, but was assured on good authority (Kanvarsathi, Ujar (48), Sriar (20), Öknarsh (8) and Piliar (52)) that this was how it was done.

881 616 Before Toda girls reach the age of puberty, before their first menses, two things have to take place. First the ceremony called *putkuli tazar utiti* ("cloak over he puts") is performed. In it, a man of the opposite moiety to that of the girl (Teivilkh if she be Tardharsh, and vice-versa), comes to the *mad* at which she lives, during the day, lies down beside her on the *ertülkh* of her *arsh* for a few minutes and puts his *putkuli* over both her and himself.

881 616 833 604 124 A fortnight later, if a Tardharsh, she will have to be deflowered by a Teivilkh, and if a member of the latter, inferior, moiety, by somebody from the opposite one (Rivers has "a man of strong physique", which is not accurate enough, see *The Todas*, p. 503). It is looked upon as a great shame for a girl to start menstruating before this has been done, which reminds me of what Duarte Barbosa says about Nayar virgins (see above, p. 170). I was naturally most intrigued by this belief, and, as Rivers alludes only in passing to the custom and does not offer any explanation, I decided to try and find out for myself what the reason for it could possibly be.

Naturally this was no easy task, as people were too shy to speak about it, but I pressed Ujar (48) to speak for over a month, considering him to be the man, because of his age, standing and disposition towards me, the most liable to talk. I gave him presents such as a bag of rice, a buffalo calf and spectacles, but still he was reticent, and I could see that, although he wanted to confide the secret to me in return, he was afraid to do so. Finally I elucidated from him that his apprehension came from the fact that he feared that should he speak in the Nilgiris, the gods would wreak punishment upon him. I decided,

13: Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW60 Toda AW60

578 674 worse was, to begin with, ever brought to my notice by my informants.

When, however, I delved more deeply into the matter, I soon found out that appearances were very deceptive, and that under a peaceful exterior, many serious acts of aggression had taken and were still taking place. Personal feuds of intense hatred and jealousy, especially among [754] the older men, seemed to be the reasons for what were not just empty accusations of witchcraft, but unmistakably crimes, and I gathered so much evidence of this that I have come to think that there are very [682] few influential old Todas who die a natural death. They are more [648] usually done away with by their rivals, through the time-honoured method of having them poisoned by the Kurumbas, mainly, I think, with *datura*.

578 682 Thus Karnoz of Melgarsh (45), whom I got to know very well, was greatly feared as a *pili* (sorceret). When I returned to the Nilgiris for [754] the second time in 1949, I found that he had reputedly done away with Ujar (48), my old and trusted informant, his uncle and chief of 115 the Melgarsh *modol*, simply because he wished to take his place at the [662] head of the clan. He had had him poisoned by his "own" Kurumbas, as it was put to me, after having first got the deceased's wife and two children out of the way in the same manner. The remaining members of the murdered man's family had fled in terfor to Kakhwurkh *mad* and their house stood empty and forlorn at Melgarsh when I came back there in 1949. Karnoz was fined Rs. 12 by the *noim* for this [683] crime and warned that, if he persisted in practising sorcery, his house 623 would be set on fire, and he himself killed.

While working with the widow of Kuriolv (52), whom Rivers describes in such eloquent terms (see *The Todas*, pp. 551–2), my wife discovered that, after having rid himself of rivals and wives alike by the habitual [648] Toda method of indirect poisoning through the agency of the Kurumbas, he was himself murdered in the same way by his wife. He ended his life practically at the same time as his rival and victim Arjgur (56) who, in a neighbouring house at Kuur, died from the effects of the poison which he, Kuriolv, had himself administered to him.

During my second stay in the Nilgiris in 1949, Piliar (52) poisoned Tödhem of Apersgor because he had had a son by a woman whom Piliar had given up, believing her to be barren. The deed was com- [761] mitted by a Kurumba in Piliar's pay who gave the poison with some 123 milk to Tödhen at a funeral which I attended. I later tried to get the [757] ailing man to hospital in Ootacamund in order to look better into his case as well as to try to save him, but to no avail. I came up against

13: Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW60 Toda AW60

the stubborn resistance of Piliar, who stood guard at the door of Tödhen's house at Apersgor, and who assured me that "Toda and Western medicine do not mix". Curiously enough, the victim agreed with his tormentor, and refused to follow me. In such cases the man usually resigns himself to a death which he feels the gods desire, but Tödhen somehow, in this case, recovered and did not die.

3. TODA POLYANDRY

The custom of polyandry is a very old one with the tribe. When questioned, the Todas will tell you that they have always practised it, and that its origins are unknown – it seems so natural a form of marriage to them. Their mythology mentioned polyandrous gods, therefore, obviously, they say, this type of matrimony has always existed.

Terkish, it seems, married an ordinary Toda called Püth who, after his death was deified. With him, the mother-goddess of the Nilgiris had thirteen children, eleven boys and two girls. None of these children married, except two of the sons, Podzövördjen and Pödjövorj, these polyandrously to an ordinary Toda woman called Notirsh. She too, after her death, became a goddess, now well-known to all Todas. From this polyandrous marriage of the gods, Kwotèn, the man-god who ran after Terkosh and was eventually carried off by her (see p. 265), was born. He married Mütürpani, a Toda woman and not a goddess, and had two sons by her, Koltawutn and Kshörwutn, of whom there are still descendants alive today (at a *mad* called *Kiaper* according to my 1939 notes, which I unfortunately have not been able to identify since; the late Ujar (48) having been my principal informant for the above).

Toda polyandry is mostly fraternal, as is usually the case elsewhere as well. But there are some cases of non-fraternal polyandry, although I, personally, found that, in those cases, the husbands were clan-brothers, that is, of the same clan and of the same generation which, in accordance with the classificatory type of Toda kinship, makes them look upon each other as brothers. Thus Wunkwur and Manarn of Norsh were married jointly to Puvamut of Tarar and lived together at the Norsh *mad*, where I often had occasion to visit them. She had been married to the first of her husbands (sons of two brothers) because he was her *matchuni*; then Wunkwur took her to wife from his cousin by paying Manarn a certain amount of buffaloes, but after some time, the latter returned and by giving half of the buffaloes back was accepted again as Puvamat's husband. *Pursütpimi* was, however, performed for

13: Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW60 Toda AW60

[Melgarsh Village]

the time of their wedding. In the unusual case of a man having no brothers and no nephews to whom the buffaloes devolve after his death, the herd will go to the *polm*.

I had put up a tent in this immediate vicinity of the Melgarsh *mad*, and was thus able, by staying in it up the twenty-four hours on certain occasions, to follow the everyday life of the family.

The habitual routine was really quite simple. The various members of Melgarsh would sleep in their respective houses as described above, and rise very early with the sun, which in southern India is already up at 4.30 a.m. Pads and Silidz would say their morning prayers (as all Todas do, see Rivers, *The Todas*, p. 31), attend to the calls of nature in the bushes close by, and then prepare the morning food. There was very little washing, the clothes which were taken off at night (under-clothes are worn then) being put on again. While Silidz was doing the cooking, Pads would go out and lend a hand with the buffaloes, which were taken out of the pen at this early hour and allowed to graze on the ground in front of the house. He was assisted in this by Munbokwutn, Pershrörsh, Narjilkh, Singarsh and sometimes Singud and Kuddhue. The latter, usually *tarvalikartmokh*, would then milk the buffaloes at 8 a.m. before they left with the boys, Munbokwutn and Singarsh, for higher grazing grounds, after the morning meal. Narjilkh would have let the calves out earlier and would have helped to retain them at Melgarsh away from their mothers. The gardeners (Pads, Mutnarsh, Pilkhlivowutn and Pufvkiaroz) once the meal was over would put on some dreadful rags, which were considered by them to be European clothes, and go off to their work in the Botanical Gardens. The women would stay at home and tidy up the houses, sweep them out, wash themselves (especially the younger ones), pound rice in the *kudi*, and cook the evening meal.

The meals are selected from the following foods: milk, buttermilk, butter, *ghee* (clarified *butter*), millet (an Indian cereal), rice, wheat flour in the form of unleavened bread or *gur*, (unrefined cane sugar), coffee, tea, chillis, bamboo shoots, fruits from the woods and honey. No meat is eaten, as Todas, like other Indians, are vegetarians. I obtained this list from Mutnarsh, and as he was very keen to give me all the information that he could, he even asked me, through the interpreter, if I wanted to see how he ate. He was willing, he said, to eat in front of me, then and there. I had some difficulty in dissuading him, and only succeeded by accepting to have rice with him another day, which I did. In caste-ridden India, this was rather exceptional, and I was glad to join

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Toda AW60

K 122

was able to park my caravan in the compound of the factory, and from there to conduct my work in the surrounding villages, both in the Walluvanad taluk and in north Cochin. I am greatly indebted to the then Collector of Malabar, Sri Prasad, for the assistance rendered to me during my stay in Kerala, for without this help it would not have been possible to gather so much information in so short a time.

Thanks are also due to Dr. A. Aiyappan, Superintendent of the Government Museum, Egmore, Madras, my fellow-student at the London School of Economics where we both attended the seminars and lectures of the late Professor Br. Malinowski. Through Dr. Aiyappan's never failing advice and active interest I saved considerable time and effort in going straight to that part of Kerala most propitious for the study of polyandry.

TO 122

While working in the Nilgiris, both before and after World War II, it would have been good to have been able to speak Toda. It would have enabled me to gather information direct, which would have been an incomparable asset during my long period of research in that area. From the wider point of view, it did not seem worth while, however, to go to the trouble of learning Toda. It is spoken by only a very small number of individuals who, being themselves illiterate, have no literature at all. It is besides a Dravidian tongue, and therefore difficult for Europeans to master quickly. I felt that I would prefer to concentrate later on acquiring Tibetan, something which would be of far wider use to me in very many fields other than the relatively narrow study of polyandry.

TO 115 [129]

I therefore turned down the idea of learning the language and, because of this, was obliged to work through an interpreter. In the choice of the latter, I was exceptionally fortunate. Very early, during the first months of my stay in the Nilgiris, in the summer of 1939, thanks to the help of Miss C. F. Ling of the Church of England Zenana Mission, I got to know Kanvarsathi-Sunderdoss, a Christian Toda convert, who had previously served Dr. M. B. Emeneau, of the University of California at Berkeley, in a like capacity, for three years, and who was to prove just as excellent an assistant to me as he had been to this predecessor of mine among the Todas.

Kanvarsathi, although belonging to the little colony of Christian Todas described by Emeneau (*The Christian Todas*, see Bibliography), was far from having developed an aversion for his heathen fellows. What was more, he was liked and accepted to a remarkable degree by the latter, a most happy state of affairs when it came to making use of

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AW11 Kerala
Toda AW60

115 him to delve into the intimate details of tribal customs. He was also a very intelligent individual who fully grasped the interest of anthropological research, and was keen to make use of the results in the hope of improving the material condition of the Todas. Without his assistance, it is doubtful whether I would have acquired so penetrating an insight into the Toda way of life, something for which I am extremely grateful to him.

[589] Kanvarsathi's father was a rather notorious character among the Todas called Kiunervan (Table 14 of Rivers' genealogical tables) who had no less than eleven wives, one after the other. Kanvarsathi was the only son of the eleventh wife, and was born in 1905 at the Toda village of Paletkwar (known as Attakoraimand in the language of the Badagas) near Or, on the left-hand side of the Ootacamund-Gudalur road. Two months after his birth, his mother died, and his half-sister, Sinkup, later wife of Ujar (48, Rivers' Ushadz, one of my best informants), a daughter of his father's second wife, took him away with her and very grudgingly looked after him.

Six years later, Kiunervan also died, leaving one boy, Kanvarsathi, and two elder girls. The total number of his father's offspring had not been very great, despite the eleven wives. There were, altogether, only three sons and two daughters, of which two boys died before Kanvarsathi was born, and the two girls after, leaving him the sole survivor. Strictly speaking he became the only heir to his father's estate, which [550] consisted, at the time of death, of sixty buffaloes and some gold ornaments – quite a considerable fortune according to Toda standards. But [919] because he was a minor, his father's brothers' sons – his first cousins on his father's side – took the property into their custody until he should come of age. Being, however, most unscrupulous, and believing that Kanvarsathi would never find out, these cousins gradually disposed of the estate to their own advantage, so that when the time came for them to hand it over, all that he got were six buffaloes and two pairs of ear-rings.

115 691 When he was ten years old, he found out the real state of affairs and how he was being done out of his legitimate inheritance. He appealed against this to the Toda Government Agent, the Monegar, and to the most influential Toda of his day, the famous Kuriolv (52, properly speaking, Kiusharf in Toda, the other name being Badaga), but to no avail. These important people could not be bothered with the complaints of so small a boy, and all he got for his trouble was to be made to look after their buffaloes. This unfairness deeply wounded him, and

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW11 Kerala
Toda AW60

continued to smoulder in his heart until, in 1917, he decided to take the matter to Court, as a result of which he did receive the remaining property. 115 [691]

Before this episode, however, his half-sister had died leaving him all alone. It was then that Miss C. F. Ling of the Church of England Zenana Mission took an interest in him and removed him to the school which she ran close to his native village at the 8th mile of the Ootacamund-Gudalur road. As a consequence of this, he was eventually converted to Christianity. After he had received the meagre remnants of his father's estate, Miss Ling sent him away to another school at Palamkottah in the Tinnevely district for further studies, and he passed there through the third form. In 1923 she sent him to Assam, to the Welsh Mission, with the idea that he should learn to be a motor mechanic, I do not quite know to which part of that large and distant province he went, as he was rather vague in his description of it, but he did say that it was wild and underdeveloped in the extreme, with no roads at all, let alone motor traffic. So, instead of being trained as a mechanic, he was made to look after the station missionary's horse as a groom, which enraged him since he had just come into what little there was left of his property and had been persuaded to leave the Nilgiris under what were apparently false pretences. [797]

After only a very few months of this most unsatisfactory situation, he ran away and managed somehow to reach Calcutta in search of work. But because of the language, Bengali, which he did not speak, he found this extremely difficult to obtain, and had to content himself with a hand to mouth exsistence. In the end, he got a job as a junior gardener with a kind missionary, the Rev. H. Kehel. He remained a year with the latter, and when he had saved enough money to pay for the railway fare, he took the train and returned to Madras. In that city he joined the large motor transport company, Addison and Co., where after twelve months' apprenticeship, he eventually got his driver's licence and became one of the firm's mechanics, keeping his position until 1928.

At this time his health deteriorated. He underwent a serious operation for a gastric ulcer and had to give up his work. He returned to the Nilgiris the following year, and began to take a lively interest in the well-being and progress of the community from which he sprang, the Todas. He joined the Collector of the Nilgiris' Toda Amelioration Scheme and was trained as an agriculturalist. He thus became an agricultural consultant for the tribe, advising it on such matters, and using his newly acquired knowledge as a means of livelihood. [242]

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AW11 Kerala
West Tibetans AJ9
Toda AW60
Tibet AJ1

TO 115 In 1931, he married a Tamil woman (that is, someone not of his community) and his eldest son was born in 1932. He subsequently had two more children, two daughters, in 1943 and 1936.

It was in 1935 that he began acting as interpreter and "guide", as he termed it, to Dr. M. B. Emeneau, and he continued to do so until 1938. He also served others in the same capacity during this time, and his health, happily, remained good. In 1939, he acted as my interpreter, but in 1942 he became seriously ill again with his old affliction, and, in Travancore, in the American Hospital of Trivandrum, was successfully operated upon for a second time. On his return he became an influential member of the Toda Welfare Committee, a body set up by the Collector of the Nilgiris to assist the community.

Since then, he has been residing at the Toda Christian colony near Fern Hill, Ootacamund, where he has a small plot of land and a vegetable garden, the produce of which he sells in the local market. From the latest news that I have received from him, I understand that he is still carrying on with these same occupations, working hard and with a considerable measure of success to improve the lot of his fellow Todas, to whom he is attached with a devotion amounting nearly to a fanatical "nationalism", for he refuses to let his erstwhile connection with a Christian Mission "detribalize" him in any way.

T WT 124 115 Those who have helped me in the same way as the informants and interpreters mentioned in the preceding paragraphs, have been far greater in number in the areas of Tibetan affinity, in the Himalayas, than in any other of the fields which I visited. In addition to assistants and interpreters of the kind I have already described, they also include Tibetologists and teachers from whom I obtained, not only information about Tibetan polyandry, but also a general knowledge of everything Tibetan which has stood me in good stead.

WT 115 First and foremost among such helpers should be mentioned Dr. George Nikolaivitch Roerich. Initially, we became acquainted in 1938, when he was residing with his father, the late Professor Nicolas Roerich, his mother and his brother, Svetoslav, at Nagar, in the Kulu valley of the Punjab. It was through him that I met the Gya-kar K'ham-pa chieftain, Tsewang Norbu, and the former monk, Lobsang, from Shigatse. Through his intermediary too, my wife and I equipped ourselves properly for the 600 miles trek from Kulu to Kashmir over Lahul, Rupchu and Ladak.

WT [22]

T 115 Our second meeting was in Kalimpong, West Bengal, in 1950. Disturbances resulting from the partition of India into India proper and